

## Minutes from the Full Governing Body Meeting

Held on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021

At 19:00 virtually via Zoom

Present	Kate Barlow (KB) – Parent Governor and Chair Helen Ruff (HR) – Headteacher David Quick (DQ) – Co-opted Governor and Vice Chair Peter Cosgrove (PG) – Co-opted Governor <i>left at 19.24</i> Alexia (Lexy) Tuckwell (LT) – Staff Governor
Absent	
Apologies	Mike Cahill (MC) – Co-opted Governor Cat Hemmings (CH) – Co-opted Governor Eve Coles – Associate Member Maria Ortin (MO) – Associate Member
In attendance	Tess Kirkby (TK) – LA Clerk

The meeting started at 19:03 and was quorate

No	Item	Action
1	<b>Welcome and apologies</b> KB welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed that apologies had been received from Mike Cahill, Cat Hemmings, Eve Coles and Maria Ortin.	
2	<b>Declarations of interest</b> None declared for this meeting	
3	<b>Notification of Urgent Business</b> HR raised the purchase of a defibrillator which will be discussed under item 17.	
4	<b>Minutes from the last meeting</b> KB advised that no minutes are available for the last meeting (29 September 2021).  <b>ACTION:</b> To seek advice from Oxfordshire Clerking Service on the absence of minutes. <b>Complete.</b>	TK
8	<b>Safeguarding review &amp; update</b> This item was taken out of order to facilitate another appointment. HR presented a draft of the report and described how it had been written. This is the third year of the online format and this year a mandatory neglect audit has been included. KB advised that the prevalence of neglect was highlighted at a recent safeguarding training event. HR explained that all staff had been given a neglect questionnaire to complete. The findings of the audit have informed an action plan; some processes will be amended as a result of the neglect audit. This includes the use of some Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) tools to supplement existing practice and neglect will be considered routinely as part of safeguarding discussions. HR advised that, although there are a couple of areas that warranted an “amber” rating, no areas within the audit were found to be significantly deficient (red) and most areas were rated green. HR advised that the ACE Centre has also been reviewed findings from OFSTED and discussed these with other nursery heads with a view to strengthening local practice. Record keeping in 2020/21 has also improved on previous years. KB explained that during her review of the audit, she and HR had mapped	

	<p>out a model to help staff confidently describe safeguarding practice to external parties (including OFSTED) – loosely described as a “what and why” document. HR advised that the review took account of the number of new members of staff at ACE who will not have experienced the procedures that were in place prior to the pandemic. LT commented that practice is good but staff may lack confidence in describing it.</p> <p><b>Governors approved the Safeguarding Review and report.</b></p>	
11	<p><b>Policies</b></p> <p>This item was taken out of order to facilitate another appointment. The following policies were shared in advance of the meeting via GovernorHub. HR confirmed that there were no significant changes from the 2020/21 policies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special Educational Needs Policy November 2021</li> <li>• Whistleblowing Policy November 2021</li> <li>• Safer Recruitment Policy November 2021</li> <li>• Physical Intervention Policy November 2021</li> <li>• Personal Care Policy November 2021</li> <li>• Mobile Phone Policy November 2021</li> <li>• Missing Child Policy November 2021</li> <li>• First Aid Policy November 2021</li> <li>• English as an Additional Language (EAL) Policy November 2021</li> </ul> <p>KB advised that there have been discussions regarding the Physical Intervention Policy. HR confirmed that Team Teach training had been considered but ultimately decided against as it is not always suitable for nursery aged children. The team already implements an approach that is 95% aligned to Team Teach and is aimed at distracting and deescalating. LT explained that Positive Handling Plans have been introduced very carefully which detail ways to avoid physically handling the child. It also sets out how to inform parents if this was unavoidable.</p> <p><b>Governors approved the above policies</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>PC left the meeting at 19:24 The meeting was no longer quorate.</i></p>	
5	<p><b>COVID update</b></p> <p>HR attended the OCC weekly briefing; Oxfordshire is experiencing unprecedented staff and pupil absences. HR reflected that absences are impacting on the ability to run full sessions. Incidents of COVID are being reported to Public Health England (PHE), OCC and OFSTED as required. Bubbles have been reintroduced to limit the opportunities for transmission. Attendees were informed that there were no current cases of the OMICRON variant within Oxfordshire, but schools were urged to review risk assessments and plans for Christmas activities. The ACE is adopting a cautious approach as the number of casual staff available has dwindled since 2019; covering absences is becoming increasingly difficult. The casual staff who are still linked to ACE have been very supportive. HR advised Governors of a national news report which recognised the difficulties nurseries are experiencing in terms of absences and vacancies; this term has been particularly challenging. HR explained that the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) are lobbying the Department for Education (DfE) in respect of OFSTED activity during this period when schools are trying to manage a return to normal curriculum and activities alongside the continuing impact of the pandemic.</p>	
6	<p><b>Governing Body Strategy update</b></p>	

	<p>KB advised that progress is being made; a meeting with Jo Pringle from Hemsalls has been scheduled for 14<sup>th</sup> December 2021.</p>	
<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>School Development Plan update</b> HR presented an overview of the School Development Plan (SDP).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) exceeds previous years. The ACE Centre has advertised for additional 1-1 support workers. In common with other nurseries, recruitment campaigns have struggled to attract interest. KB recommended that other methods for circulating adverts should be considered e.g. local social media groups. LT has been using non-contact time to provide support and supervision for staff. In addition, external SEN support has been available, particularly Speech and Language Therapists.</li> <li>• Vulnerable learners – a new assessment process and revisions to the EYFS framework have been implemented this term. HR explained that the new assessment is more streamlined and highlights gaps more clearly. The next iteration of the process will include language screening. Safeguarding processes have been reviewed to provide better support children of concern; more time for staff to manage/review action plans for these children regularly which will help improve the support in place. HR reflected that the new intake (September) appears to have settled really well. <b>A Governor asked what had caused the delay in the introduction of the WellComm screening.</b> HR explained that both time and the need to implement the new EYFS framework had limited the opportunities to introduce WellComm. LT explained that the staff know the children very well – any who are identified as having speech and language needs are responding to interventions that are already in place and are also being supported by Speech and Language Therapists. LT explained that WellComm will not bring significant changes in practice but it will replace the system currently in place and is a better fit for the new EYFS framework as it standardises Speech and Language strategies and interventions. <b>A Governor asked if the ACE Centre will receive more funding in response to the significant increase in the number of SEN children.</b> HR confirmed that the funding should follow once the necessary processes have been completed; 26% of the children have a recognised SEN but it is simply not possible to divert 26% of the core funding to meet those additional needs.</li> <li>• Progression of knowledge and skills – the Curriculum Aims (shared in advance via GovernorHub) have benefitted from significant staff input. KB commented that the Early Years training material very closely reflected the ACE curriculum aims and identified some best practice, much of which is already in place at ACE. HR explained that the aims will be developed further with the specific aim of responding to/managing challenging behaviour. Staff have been able to access remote Continuing Professional Development (CPD) via an Early Years online conference. A report on early reading skills will be presented to Governors at the next FGB.</li> <li>• Behaviour and wellbeing – HR described the approach to upskilling staff in recognising and responding better to need. The routine is being developed, drawing on the knowledge of two very experienced teachers.</li> <li>• Leadership and management – the plan to integrate preschool and childcare is a work in progress. Planning processes and workload management are being reviewed to ensure they are effective. HR explained that management time has been eroded due to funding issues and this has impacted on the work that can be achieved. KB acknowledged that the new framework is designed to support a better workload. ACE is supporting the Oxfordshire Teaching School Hub as far as is practicable.</li> </ul>	

	<b>Governors accepted the SDP.</b>	
<b>7.1</b>	<p><b>Monitoring plan, schedule of visits &amp; feedback</b> KB circulated a list of possible visits and subjects. LT suggested that visits afforded the opportunity to test out any concerns on workload. DC flagged concerns about monitoring activity in person in the context of the likelihood of seeing elderly/vulnerable relatives in the run up to the Christmas period. It was agreed that interviews could be facilitated via Zoom and observations could also be facilitated.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> To review visits and monitoring plan at next FGB  <b>ACTION:</b> To contact Mike Cahill and arrange a SEN Zoom call w/c 13 December  <b>ACTION:</b> To establish remove appointments for staff wellbeing  <b>ACTION:</b> To devise a set of questions for Governors to support discussions with staff on EYFS framework</p>	<p>KB LT KB LT/HR</p>
<b>7.2</b>	<p><b>Curriculum Update (revised EYFS September 2021)</b> See item 7 above. KB reminded all that governors are <u>required</u> to read the Curriculum Aims document shared on GovernorHub.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> To read the Curriculum Aims and share any feedback with HR</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<b>7.3</b>	<p><b>Pupil Premium update</b> HR advised that the number of Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) children has decreased this term, from approximately 30% to 20%. <b>A Governor asked what might be the reason for this decrease?</b> HR explained that some documentation may be outstanding. Statistics on EYPP learners were shared along with a description of the actions/priorities for each child. HR confirmed that the EYPP grant spend to date has been primarily used to maintain support for children who are not yet funded. This is available to staff work with these children but cannot be shared on GovernorHub. HR explained that there is quite a strong overlap between EYPP children and those for whom there are safeguarding concerns – these children are often vulnerable in many areas.</p>	
<b>9</b>	<b>Committee meetings</b>	
<b>9.1</b>	<p>Finance Due to meet 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021</p>	
<b>9.2</b>	<p>Health &amp; Safety Due to meet 13<sup>th</sup> December 2021</p>	
<b>9.3</b>	<p>Performance &amp; Standards (includes Pupil Premium &amp; SEND update) TBC</p>	
<b>10</b>	<p><b>Staff Performance Management Update</b> HR has completed the performance review of the Lead and Second Teacher. LT has completed performance reviews on the remaining teaching staff. HR acknowledged that these have been a little later than planned owing to the impact of absences but should be complete before the end of term. There are plans to use the INSET day and some home visit time (there are fewer new starters) at the start of the Spring Term if necessary. LT confirmed that support staff will have their performance management on a home visit day. KB acknowledged that the performance management review for HR needs to be scheduled. The School Improvement Partner was going to participate as the external advisor but is now unable to attend. HR advised of an alternative option which could facilitate both her own review and that of the headteacher of a neighbouring school. The proposal was discussed and assurances were given about the role of the 3<sup>rd</sup> party advisor which will not cut across the Governors' evaluation. DC confirmed approval of this plan.</p>	
<b>12</b>	<b>Correspondence and Chairs Action</b>	

	None received.																									
<b>13</b>	<p><b>Governor Training and Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>KB attended the Early Years Governance Training – the training pack contains pictures which help Governors to identify good practice in observations</li> <li>KB attended the Oxfordshire Governors Association event with Tony Breslin as speaker – the subject of his new book is how to maintain the good innovations brought about by the response to COVID. The speaker also recognised the most significant impact of COVID was on children’s social and emotional development rather than attainment and that this is the most significant issue for schools.</li> </ul>																									
<b>14</b>	<p><b>Meeting Dates 2021/22</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="4">MEETING DATES 2021/22</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Day</th> <th>Date</th> <th>Time</th> <th>Focus</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Wednesday</td> <td>19<sup>th</sup> January 2021</td> <td>7.00pm</td> <td>tba</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wednesday</td> <td>23<sup>rd</sup> March 2021</td> <td>7.00pm</td> <td>tba</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wednesday</td> <td>11<sup>th</sup> May 2021</td> <td>7.00pm</td> <td>tba</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wednesday</td> <td>29<sup>th</sup> June 2021</td> <td>7.00pm</td> <td>tba</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	MEETING DATES 2021/22				Day	Date	Time	Focus	Wednesday	19 <sup>th</sup> January 2021	7.00pm	tba	Wednesday	23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2021	7.00pm	tba	Wednesday	11 <sup>th</sup> May 2021	7.00pm	tba	Wednesday	29 <sup>th</sup> June 2021	7.00pm	tba	
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<b>15</b>	<p><b>Friends update</b></p> <p>HR advised that the Chipping Norton Festival have requested to use The ACE Centre for events over the weekend of 22 – 24<sup>th</sup> April 2022. Governors acknowledged this as an opportunity to reignite interest from parents in Friends of ACE.</p>																									
<b>16</b>	<p><b>A Moment to Celebrate</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupil progress</li> <li>Level of stress that staff are experiencing is not impacting on the children</li> <li>The team have pulled together to ensure continuity and that ensure pupil progress</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION:</b> To write a Christmas message to staff on behalf of Governors</p>	<b>KB</b>																								
<b>17</b>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>HR advised Governors that staff have been trained in the use of a defibrillator. DfE policy is to encourage schools to have a defibrillator on site although there is no funding available for nurseries to do so. If one is purchased there is a requirement for it to be installed on an outside wall and for it to be accessible to the public. Power and heat requirements make this more complicated given the physical layout at The ACE Centre. LT suggested that if purchased, it should be kept in the main office with a notice outside to alert the community to its location. HR explained that the cost was estimated to be £1.2k - £1.5k and asked Governors to approve this purchase from the Special Purchases Account.</p> <p><b>Governors approved this purchase.</b></p> <p>HR relayed information from NAHT of a 3.5% increase in supplementary funding and a 7% increase in EYPP funding (the first increase since 2016) in the 2022/23 financial year.</p>																									

The meeting ended at 20:49